

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3816

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 WARSAW 6444

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR PL US

SUBJ: DIVIDED-FAMILY CASES

1. I CALLED ON VICE MINISTER SPASOWSKI TODAY FOR A TOUR D' HORIZON BEFORE MY RETURN TO WASHINGTON. I WAS ACCOMPANIED BY DCM BROWN. DIRECTOR OF NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS JAN KINAST SAT IN WITH THE VICE MINISTER.

2. I GAVE THE VICE MINISTER THE TEXT OF THE PRESIDENT'S PROCLAMATION ON PULASKI DAY, WHICH WE RECEIVED IN TODAY'S WIRELESS FILE. I ALSO EXTENDED CONDOLENCES ON THE SEPTEMBER 7 MINE DISASTER IN SOUTHERN POLAND WHICH CLAIMED 18 LIVES. SPASOWSKI EXPRESSED APPRECIATION ON BEHALF OF THE GOP ON BOTH COUNTS.

3. OUR CONVERSATION TOUCHED ON THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT REGISTRATION OF "FREE POLAND" (STATE 223698), KOREA, THE HOLY CASE, AND THE EMBASSY'S INTEREST IN PURCHASING PROPERTY IN KRAKOW, ALL OF WHICH WILL BE COVERED IN SEPTELS.

4. MOST OF OUR 2 1/4-HOUR TALK, HOWEVER, DEALT WITH THE DIVIDED-FAMILY ISSUE AND IS SUMMARIZED IN THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS.

5. I BEGAN BY CITING THE EXTENT TO WHICH US-SOVIET RELATIONS AND HELSINKI HAVE BECOME CAMPAIGN ISSUES IN THE US. I MENTIONED GOVERNOR CARTER'S SEPTEMBER 8 CRITICISM BEFORE B'NAI B'RITH OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S HANDLING OF THE EMIGRATION ISSUE WITH THE USSR. I ALSO CITED THE CREATION OF THE NEW JOINT CONGRESSIONAL

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COMMITTEE TO OVERSEE BASKET III IMPLEMENTATION AS A PRECURSOR OF

INTENSIFIED CONCERN ON THE HILL OVER THE QUESTION OF FREE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE. I SAID THE EMBASSY HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO PREPARE STATISTICS ON POLISH EMIGRATION PERFORMANCE, AND THE NUMBERS WE HAVE COMPILED DO NOT MAKE FOR A VERY CONVINCING CASE OF POLISH COMPLIANCE WITH THE HELSINKI ACCORDS. EVEN THE SOVIETS HAVE DONE BETTER, I SAID, ESPECIALLY IN TERMS OF THE PERCENTAGE OF APPROVALS AGAINST TOTAL APPLICATIONS.

6. I THEN SHOWED SPASOWSKI A PARTIAL CHRONOLOGY OF NOTES, CONVERSATIONS, AND OTHER APPROACHES WE HAD MADE TO THE GOP ON THE DIVIDED-FAMILY QUESTION, PRACTICALLY ALL WITHOUT RESPONSE. I ALSO GAVE HIM A COPY OF A GRAPH DEPICTING THE DOWNWARD SLOPE OF EMIGRATION FROM POLAND OVER RECENT YEARS. I REMINDED SPASOWSKI THAT WE HAD RECEIVED MANY PROMISES OF POSITIVE ACTION, BUT SO FAR WE HAVE LITTLE TO SHOW FOR OUR EFFORTS. SUCH UNRESPONSIVENESS, I CONCLUDED, IS NOT CONSONANT WITH THE EXCELLENT STATE OF OUR GENERAL RELATIONS AND MAY VERY WELL ENDANGER THIS CONDITION IN THE MONTHS AHEAD.

7. IN RESPONSE, SPASOWSKI REFERRED TO THE NUMEROUS CONVERSATIONS HE AND I HAVE HAD ON THIS SUBJECT AND SAID THE MFA SEES IT AS THE ONLY REAL ISSUE BETWEEN THE US AND POLAND. HE ALSO AGREED THAT IT COULD JEOPARDIZE THE GOOD STATE OF OUR TIES IN THE FUTURE.

8. HE REPEATED WHAT HE HAS SAID TO ME OVER AND OVER IN THE PAST: THE MATTER IS NOT AN EASY ONE FOR POLAND. POLISH POLICY IS NOT TO STIMULATE EMIGRATION. THE GOP BELIEVES THAT POLAND IS THE PLACE FOR POLES AND THAT PREVIOUS ECONOMIC REASONS FOR LEAVING THE COUNTRY ARE NO LONGER VALID OR COMPELLING. NEVERTHELESS, HE ADMITTED, THERE ARE GENUINE CASES OF DIVIDED FAMILIES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ON A HUMANITARIAN BASIS. THE ISSUE TO A GREAT EXTENT, HE SAID, REVOLVES AROUND THE DEFINITION OF FAMILIES. TO THE POLISH AUTHORITIES, A "FAMILY" CONSISTS OF HUSBAND, WIFE, AND CHILDREN, AND IN CASES OF SEPARATION OF THIS BASIC UNIT, MANY REUNIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE. BUT WHEN THE DIVISION IS BETWEEN BROTHERS AND SISTERS, ESPECIALLY INVOLVING ONE PERSON IN THE US CALLING FOR SEVERAL RELATIVES IN POLAND TO JOIN HIM, THE ISSUE IS VIEWED BY WARSAW IN DIFFERENT TERMS. REUNIFICATION IN SUCH CASES CAN WORK AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF THE STATE. FOR EXAMPLE, THE STATE'S ECONOMIC INTERESTS CAN BE DAMAGED BY THE LOSS OF WORKERS.

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9. SPASOWSKI THEN REFERRED TO THE SPECIAL CATEGORY OF "DIFFICULT" CASES, SUCH A VISITORS WHO HAD ADJUSTED STATUS IN THE US AND THEN APPEALED FOR OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS TO FOLLOW. SUCH CASES, HE SAID, CANNOT BE VIEWED AS EXCLUSIVELY HUMANITARIAN. HE HOPED THAT THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION, PARTICULARLY IN ITS DEALINGS WITH CONGRESS, WOULD TRY TO EXPLAIN SOME OF THESE CRITERIA TO THOSE CALLING FOR A FREE FLOW OF PEOPLES.

10. I RESPONDED THAT, AS A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS OURSELVES, WE WOULD NEVER BE SATISFIED WITH RESTRICTIONS ON THE FREE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE. FURTHERMORE, THE GOP'S CONCEPTS OF LOYALTY AND ECONOMIC DRAIN THROUGH EMIGRATION ARE BOTH QUESTIONABLE AND ARE FAR TOO RESTRICTIVE. WITH REGARD TO THE LATTER, POLAND UNDOUBTEDLY REAPS CONSIDERABLE FINANCIAL BENEFIT THROUGH REMITTANCES SENT BACK BY IMMIGRANTS TO THE U.S. IN ANY EVENT, THERE WILL BE INCREASING SKEPTICISM IN THE US CONCERNING THE POSITIVE POLICY WE HAVE PURSUED TOWARD POLAND IF THE EMIGRATION QUESTION REMAINS A CONTENTIOUS ISSUE. MY OBJECTIVE, I SAID, WAS PROPHYLACTIC, DESIGNED TO AVOID IF AT ALL POSSIBLE A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON OUR RELATIONS.

DAVIES

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 WARSAW 6444

11. WE THEN ENGAGED IN A RATHER HEATED EXCHANGE OVER FIGURES I HAD GIVEN SPASOWSKI AND OVER PRACTICES OF CONSULAR OFFICERS AND THE INS IN REFUSING VISA APPLICATIONS AND APPLICANTS. KINAST PRODUCED SOME STATISTICS HE HAD COMPILED ON THE CASES ENUMERATED IN THE 19 NOTES THE EMBASSY HAS PRESENTED TO THE MFA SINCE THE BEGINNING OF 1974. ACCORDING TO HIS FIGURES, THESE 19 NOTES COVERED 1,018 CASES, OR 2,650 INDIVIDUALS. OF THAT NUMBER OF PERSON, 815 ARE CONSIDERED GENUINE DIVIDED-FAMILY CASES UNDER THE POLISH CRITERIA SKETCHED IN PARA 8 ABOVE. THE REST CONSIST OF EXTENSIVE FAMILY CONNECTIONS IN POLAND, ALL WITH A COMPARATIVELY SMALL NUMBER OF RELATIVES IN THE US. OF THE 815, "MOST" ("AT LEAST 50 PER CENT") HAVE BEEN RESOLVED OR ARE UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION. "A FEW HUNDRED" OF THOSE

FROM THE SAME CATEGORY ARE NO LONGER INTERESTED IN
EMIGRATING. KINAST CLAIMED.

12. KINAST ALSO SAID THAT POLISH FIGURES ON DEPARTURES,
WHICH ARE COMPILED ON A CALENDER-YEAR BASIS, ARE ALSO
HIGHTER THAN THOSE SHOWN IN THE EMBASSY'S GRAPH. HE THEN
RATIONALIZED THE HIGHER FIGURES IN THE EARLY 1960'S AS
BEING THE PENT-UP DEMAND STEMMING FROM MORE RESTRICTIVE
EMIGRATION POLITICES OF 1950'S AND COMPLAINED THAT OUR
DEPARTURE DATA DO NOT GIVE PROPER RECOGNITION TO THE
RECENT SHARP INCREASE IN PRIVATE VISITORS TRAVELING TO
THE US.

13. I SAID THAT WE WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO RECEIVE THE
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MINISTRY'S FIGURES AND THAT, EVEN IF WE DID NOT AGREE
WITH THEM, AT LEAST THEY SHOWED SOME RESPONSIVENESS TO
OUR REPEATED EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN.

14. PART OF OUR PROBLEM, I CONCLUDED, STEMS FROM THE REPEATED
FAILURE OF THE GOP TO GIVE US ANSWERS TO THE APPEALS WE
HAD MADE ON THIS SUBJECT. MY REPORTING SUCH BRUSH-OFFS TO
WASHINGTON CAN ONLY CONTRIBUTE TO THE POTENTIAL DANGER TO
OUR GENERAL RELATIONS THAT MAY STEM FROM THIS ISSUE.

15. COMMENT: THIS CONVERSATION DID NOT ADVANCE US VERY
FAR TOWARDS A SOLUTION OF THE DIVIDED-FAMILY QUESTION. I
BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT SPASOWSKI UNDERSTANDS OUR CON-
CERN AND IS GENUINELY EMBARRASSED OVER POLISH PERFORMANCE
SO FAR, BUT AT THE SAME TIME IS UNABLE TO DO MUCH ABOUT
IT. HE APPEARS TO RECOGNIZE THAT THE PROBLEM IS THE GOP'S,
HOWEVER, AND NOT OURS. MY INCLINATION AT THIS POINT IS TO
CONTINUE TO KEEP THE HEAT ON AT A LEVEL SUFFICIENT TO
SHOW OUR REAL CONCERN, BUT TO CONTINUE TO LEAVE NO DOUBT
IN THE MINDS OF THE GOP THAT THE BALL IS IN ITS COURT.
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